

Public Health's Approach to Violence Prevention in Four Steps

Violence prevention involves these steps to take flight.



1. DEFINE THE PROBLEM

This step involves collecting data to find out the “who,” “what,” “where,” “when,” and “how” of violence happening in a given jurisdiction. Data come from a variety of sources — death certificates, medical or coroner reports, hospital records, child welfare records, law enforcement, population-based surveys, and more resources.



2. IDENTIFY RISK AND PROTECTIVE FACTORS

In this step, you explore why some people or communities experience more violence than others. Scientific research reveals what puts people at risk and what protects them. Risk factors are the characteristics of populations or settings that increase the risk for violence. Protective factors buffer against the risk factors and decrease the likelihood of violence. The goal of violence prevention is decrease risk factors and increase protective factors – thereby reducing violence.



3. DEVELOP AND TEST PREVENTION STRATEGIES

In this step, prevention strategies are developed using the information gathered in steps 1 and 2. Once prevention strategies are developed, they are rigorously evaluated to see if they prevent violence.



4. ASSURE WIDESPREAD ADOPTION

In this step effective strategies are disseminated and implemented widely for greater impact. Though this is considered the final step of the public health model, assessments and evaluations continue. Continued evaluation helps ensure all components of a strategy fit within a community and have the desired effect of preventing violence.

Learn more about this approach with **Violence Prevention in Practice:**
<https://vetoviolence.cdc.gov/apps/violence-prevention-practice>